

DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL

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ABC Cites Three Clerks for Selling Alcohol to Minors

(Santa Maria) - Investigators of the California Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) along with the Santa Maria Police Department have cited three clerks for selling alcohol to minors. The actions were the result of a minor decoy operation in which minors under the direct supervision of department investigators, attempted to purchase alcohol from six retail licensees in the City of Santa Maria on March 28, 2009.

Those who sold to a minor face a minimum fine of \$250, and/or 24 to 32 hours of community service for a first violation. In addition, ABC will take administrative action against the alcoholic beverage license of the business. That may include a fine, a suspension of the license, or the permanent revocation of the license.

ABC is conducting the compliance checks state-wide to reduce the availability of alcohol to minors. Statistics have shown that young people under the age of 21 have a higher rate of drunken driving fatalities than the general adult population.

Minor Decoy operations have been conducted by local law enforcement throughout the state since the 1980's. In 1994, the California Supreme Court ruled unanimously that use of underage decoys is a valid tool of law enforcement to ensure that licensees are complying with the law.

ABC is a department of the Business, Transportation and Housing Agency, which is under the direction of Secretary Dale E. Bonner, a member of the Governor's Cabinet.